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1972

Michigan Asparagus Survey
Acreage, Production and Marketing
1972

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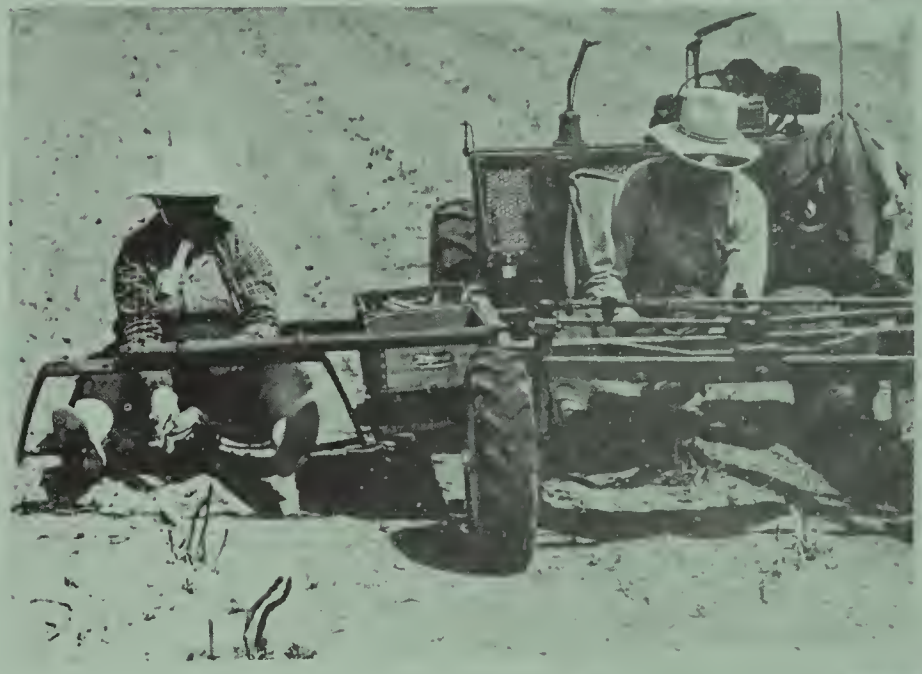
OCTOBER 1972

Harvesting by hand,
with tractor drawn equipment

Harvested asparagus



Three-man harvest aide

Asparagus fern growth

M I C H I G A N

A S P A R A G U S S U R V E Y

1 9 7 2

BY

Ming W. Wu, Economic Analyst

And

Arvin R. Budge, Agricultural Statistician

Compiled by

MICHIGAN CROP REPORTING SERVICE

Charles A. Hines, Agricultural Statistician, In Charge

MICHIGAN AND UNITED STATES DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE

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F O R E W O R D

This survey was conducted at the request of the Michigan Asparagus Research Committee. The information in this bulletin will provide a valuable guide for future asparagus production and marketing plans. It will also provide data which will help personnel involved in research, extension and business to better serve the asparagus industry in Michigan.

The data presented are not to be considered as official estimates, but as compilations of information that asparagus growers reported.

The assistance of the Michigan Asparagus Research Committee in the initial ground work of the survey is gratefully acknowledged. A special appreciation is extended to E. G. Van Sickle, Secretary of Michigan Canners and Freezers Association, the Asparagus Processors, and the County Extension Agents, all of whom provided able assistance in compiling the lists of asparagus growers. Also, a special thanks goes to all the asparagus growers for providing the basic information which comprise the bulk of data in this publication.

Further appreciation is extended to Harry A. Foster, Manager of Asparagus Division, Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association, Ray Floate, Michigan Fruit Canners, Dr. H. Grant Vest, Jr., Department of Horticulture and Richard Divelbiss, Information Service of Michigan State University for the pictures displayed in this bulletin.

The overall planning and development of the survey was coordinated by Arvin R. Budge. The computer program was developed by Larry K. Roberson and the data were analyzed and summerized by Ming W. Wu. Also, Glenn A. Swanson, former Assistant Statistician, In Charge, made significant contributions to the survey. Mr. Wallace Evans, Assistant Statistician, In Charge, was instrumental in bringing the report to conclusion. A very deserved thanks to the clerks, typists and keypunchers in preparing the data.

C. A. HINES
Agricultural Statistician,
In Charge

SUMMARY

The data collected for this survey were tabulated to present asparagus acreage, yield per acre, and age of plantings, The findings of this survey should provide essential information needed by asparagus growers, processors, and handlers in their development and promotional programs.

A total of 1,003 Michigan growers reported 18,493 acres of asparagus in 1972. The major production area is concentrated in the western part of the State. Oceana county reported the largest number of acres, accounting for 38 percent of the State's total. Van Buren and Berrien were next in line with 28 and 15 percent, respectively. This survey excluded any possible asparagus operations in the Upper Peninsula and most of the eastern part of the State. The survey found that three-quarters of the growers had small acreage, growing only 20 acres or less of asparagus.

As for the age of plantings, more than one-fourth of the total reported acreage was three years of age and under, while just under one-fourth was 16 years or older. This leaves slightly more than half the acreage in prime production stage.

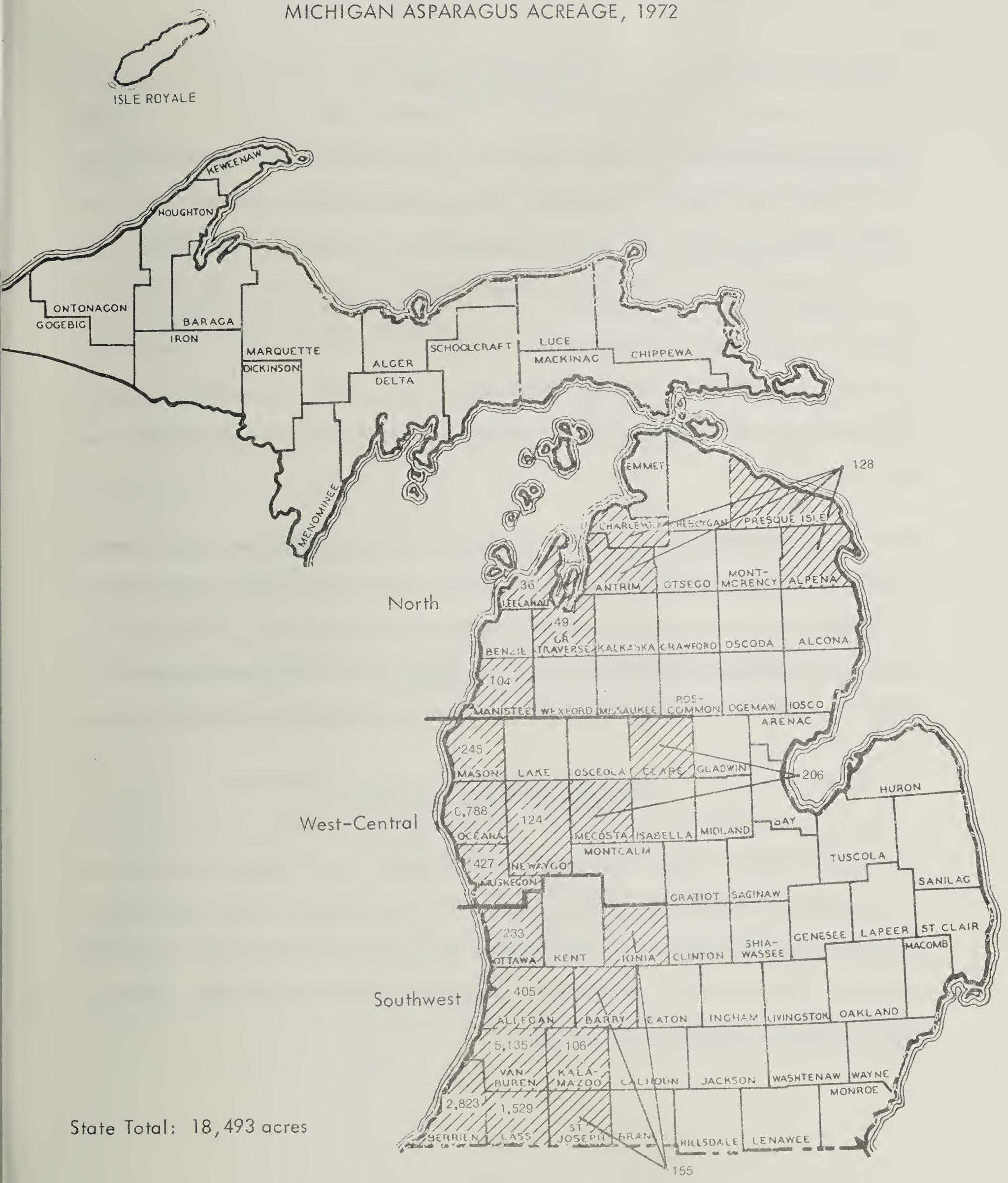
In 1972, of the 18,493 acres of asparagus reported, 12,677 acres or 69 percent were harvested; 3,890 acres or 21 percent were reported as non-bearing, and 1,926 acres or 10 percent were not harvested for economic reasons. A total production of 18,681,327 pounds was harvested by the respondents in 1972, at an average yield of 1,474 pounds per acre.

The average density of crowns planted varied from 7,185 to 10,360 per acre depending on the age of plantings. Those with the lowest density were planted prior to 1957, while the highest density of planting came in 1972. This shows an increasing planted density over the years. There is no significant difference in the average density among districts.

The survey also reveals that 93 percent of the total asparagus production was sold to processors, 6 percent went to fresh markets and the remaining 1 percent was for other uses. A comparatively higher portion of sales, (10 percent), was made through fresh markets in the southwest district, where there is more access to market.

Harvest intentions for 1973 was reported to be about 15,360 acres, 760 acres or 5.2 percent more than the acreage of harvesting age in 1972.

MICHIGAN ASPARAGUS ACREAGE, 1972



State Total: 18,493 acres

SURVEY OBJECTIVE

Asparagus, with sales of nearly 6 million dollars in 1972, is one of the most valuable members of the State's vast vegetable family. Michigan ranked third among all states in the production of asparagus during 1972.

The primary objective of this survey was to better evaluate the current status in the production and marketing of asparagus in the State. Other important objectives were to identify areas of production, to provide information on age of plantings and to check plant population per acre of all age groups.

Over the last several years, there has been a noticeable decline in asparagus yields but a sharp increase in acreage. Considering these trends, much more is needed to be known about asparagus operations in the State. The express intention of this survey was to provide pertinent data for those within the Michigan asparagus industry, including processors, growers, and others.

SURVEY AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

From the asparagus grower list supplied by asparagus processors in the State, a total of 1,208 questionnaires were mailed out in mid-June. From this list, 382 were stratified as large operations, (with total asparagus sales of 10,000 pounds or more in 1971), and 826 were classified as small operations, (with sales less than 10,000 pounds in 1971).

Six days after the first questionnaires were mailed out, a second request was mailed to each of the non-respondents. A total of 554 questionnaires or 46 percent were returned within a period of eleven days. On the 26th of June all the large operators who failed to return a questionnaire and 25 percent of the small operators who failed to respond were selected for follow-up interviews. The data obtained from the 25 percent sample of the smaller operations were expanded to account for the whole group.

Of the 1,208 reports, 245 or nearly 20 percent had sold their farms or had never grown asparagus, and 17 or 1.4 percent were duplication of names or included in other growers' reports.

Thirty one growers or 2.5 percent indicated they were not interested in providing information on their asparagus business, and 46 growers or 3.8 percent could not be contacted during the survey period. In order to derive as complete and accurate totals as possible, county and size group averages were assigned to each of these growers.

Following the interviews, telephone inquiries were made to further check for incompleteness. A grower list secured from the County Extension Service was used for this purpose. As a result of this telephone survey, 57 additional asparagus growers were contacted. These growers along with their asparagus data were included in the respective totals. Altogether, 1,003 known asparagus growers are included in this study.

NUMBER OF ASPARAGUS GROWERS AND ACREAGE

Geographically, 68 percent of the State's 1,003 asparagus growers were located in the southwest district. They accounted for 56 percent of the State's asparagus acreage. Thirty percent of the growers accounting for 42 percent of the acreage were located in the west central district. The remainder, approximately 2 percent of the growers were in the north district and accounted for about 2 percent of asparagus acres (Table 1).

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF GROWERS AND ACREAGE, BY COUNTIES, 1972

DISTRICT and COUNTY	Number of growers		Total asparagus	
	Number of reports	Percent	Acres	Percent
Grand Traverse & Leelanau	7	0.7	85	0.5
Manistee	5	0.5	104	0.6
Other Counties	7	0.7	128	0.7
NORTH	19	1.9	317	1.7
Mason	9	0.9	245	1.3
Muskegon	16	1.5	429	2.3
Newaygo	6	0.5	124	0.7
Oceana	268	26.7	6,788	36.7
Other Counties	5	0.5	206	1.1
WEST CENTRAL	304	30.1	7,790	42.1
Allegan	32	3.1	405	2.2
Berrien	199	20.0	2,823	15.3
Cass	65	6.5	1,529	8.3
Kalamazoo	17	1.7	106	0.6
Ottawa	14	1.4	233	1.3
Van Buren	345	34.5	5,135	27.8
Other Counties	8	0.8	155	0.8
SOUTHWEST	680	68.0	10,386	56.2
STATE TOTAL	1,003	100.0	18,493	100.0

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF GROWERS AND ACREAGE, BY SIZE GROUP, 1972

ACREAGE SIZE GROUPS	Number of growers		Total asparagus acreage	
	Number of reports	Percent	Acres	Percent
Less than 5	356	35.5	1,233	6.7
5 - 9	247	24.6	1,932	10.4
10 - 19	161	16.1	2,610	14.1
20 - 39	132	13.2	3,910	21.1
40 - 59	49	4.8	2,517	13.6
60 - 79	23	2.3	1,629	8.8
80 - 99	15	1.5	1,377	7.5
100 and over	20	2.0	3,294	17.8
TOTAL	1,003	100.0	18,493	100.0

Van Buren, Oceana and Berrien were the three leading counties in asparagus production, and included about 80 percent of both number of growers and the total acreage for the State.

As for the average size of asparagus operations in the State, about one-third of the growers operated less than 5 acres. Slightly over three-quarters of the State's growers averaged less than 20 acres. Only 2 percent operated 100 acres or more in 1972 (Table 2). Most of the asparagus operations seemed to be subordinate to other farm enterprises.

In the percent distribution for size groups, the largest number of acres, (31 percent), fell in the size groups of less than 20 acres. The size group "20-39" with 21 percent of the total acres was the second highest. Next in line was the "100 acres or more" size group which accounted for 18 percent of the total asparagus acreage.

ASPARAGUS ACREAGE AND AGE OF PLANTINGS

The State's asparagus acreage covered by the survey in 1972 totaled 18,493 acres. Total new plantings in 1972 were 1,992 acres or about 11 percent of total (Table 3). Plantings in 1971 were 1,213 acres or 6.5 percent, while 1970 plantings totaled 1,629 acres, or nearly 9 percent. During the 1967-1969 period, annual plantings averaged 1,450 acres or about 7 percent each year.

TABLE 3. ASPARAGUS ACREAGE, AND AGE OF PLANTING, BY COUNTIES

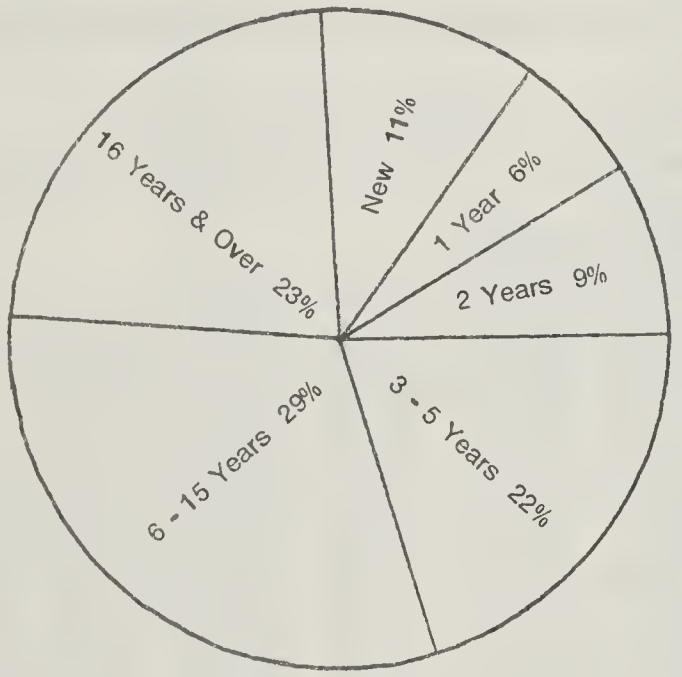
DISTRICT and COUNTY	Acres planted in						
	1972	1971	1970	1967-1969	1957-1966	Before 1957	Total
Grd. Traverse & Leelanau	32	0	0	45	8	0	85
Manistee	3	19	5	41	22	14	104
Other Counties	0	0	0	67	27	34	128
NORTH	35	19	5	153	57	48	317
Percent	11.0	6.0	1.6	48.3	18.0	15.1	100
Mason	5	6	32	135	60	7	245
Muskegon	30	9	9	80	225	74	427
Newaygo	0	0	21	6	27	70	124
Oceana	733	512	727	1,663	1,987	1,116	6,788
Other Counties	19	43	9	15	120	0	206
WEST CENTRAL	787	570	798	1,899	2,419	1,317	7,790
Percent	10.1	7.3	10.3	24.4	31.0	16.9	100
Allegan	68	10	12	20	139	156	405
Berrien	396	153	201	287	763	1,023	2,823
Cass	147	71	111	490	424	286	1,529
Kalamazoo	0	0	0	14	32	60	106
Ottawa	28	7	18	67	53	60	233
Van Buren	503	375	484	1,106	1,440	1,227	5,135
Other Counties	28	8	0	20	87	12	155
SOUTHWEST	1,170	624	826	2,004	2,938	2,824	10,386
Percent	11.2	6.0	8.0	19.3	28.3	27.2	100
STATE TOTAL	1,992	1,213	1,629	4,056	5,414	4,189	18,493
Percent	10.8	6.5	8.9	21.9	29.3	22.6	100

TABLE 4. ASPARAGUS ACREAGE: AGE OF PLANTING BY SIZE GROUP

ACREAGE SIZE GROUPS	Acres planted in						
	1972	1971	1970	1967-1969	1957-1966	Before 1957	Total
Less than 5	74	27	217	179	274	462	1,233
5 - 9	119	27	148	304	631	703	1,932
10 - 19	378	125	142	519	774	672	2,610
20 - 39	725	265	364	910	836	801	3,901
40 - 59	267	212	168	587	749	534	2,517
60 - 79	124	125	112	511	501	256	1,629
80 - 99	175	147	205	183	429	238	1,377
100 and over	130	285	273	863	1,220	523	3,294
TOTAL	1,992	1,213	1,629	4,056	5,414	4,189	18,493

On a statewide basis, 26 percent of the State's asparagus acreage was under three years of age, while about 23 percent of the acreage was 16 years or older. This leaves about half of the State's asparagus acres in prime production stage.

Generally, a higher portion of acres in the smaller size groups was in the older age groups. The larger size groups had a higher portion of acres in the younger age groups. The largest size group had the largest percentage of acres in the prime production stage (Table 4).



Percent of Asparagus Acreage by Age Groups, 1972

THE DENSITY OF ASPARAGUS CROWNS

The density of crowns planted as reported by the counties, ranged from a low of about 7,000 per acre to 12,500 per acre depending on the age of plantings. In each age group, the densities were slightly different from one county to another; however, the district averages were fairly consistent.

TABLE 5. THE DENSITY OF ASPARAGUS CROWNS PLANTED, BY YEARS AND COUNTIES

DISTRICT and COUNTY	Average crowns per acre planted in					
	1972	1971	1970	1967-1969	1957-1966	Before 1957
Grand Traverse & Leelanau	10,750	0	0	11,000	*	0
Manistee	*	11,500	*	10,000	*	*
Other Counties	0	0	0	*	*	*
NORTH	10,700	11,500	*	10,400	8,750	*
Mason	*	9,500	10,000	11,340	9,500	*
Muskegon	*	*	9,000	9,625	9,500	*
Newaygo	0	0	*	*	8,000	7,000
Oceana	10,281	10,253	9,231	9,063	8,209	7,480
Other Counties	*	*	*	*	9,040	0
WEST CENTRAL	10,281	10,221	9,240	9,238	8,460	7,157
Allegan	12,400	*	8,150	8,100	7,840	7,145
Berrien	10,192	9,925	9,989	10,825	8,579	7,888
Cass	10,285	11,667	10,750	11,833	8,840	7,350
Kalamazoo	0	0	0	*	8,000	*
Ottawa	11,000	12,500	*	7,500	9,500	7,000
Van Buren	9,765	10,310	8,975	8,429	8,391	7,058
Other Counties	*	*	0	*	*	*
SOUTHWEST	10,427	10,114	9,392	9,297	8,440	7,201
STATE AVERAGE	10,362	10,197	9,325	9,296	8,450	7,185

* Not reported to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

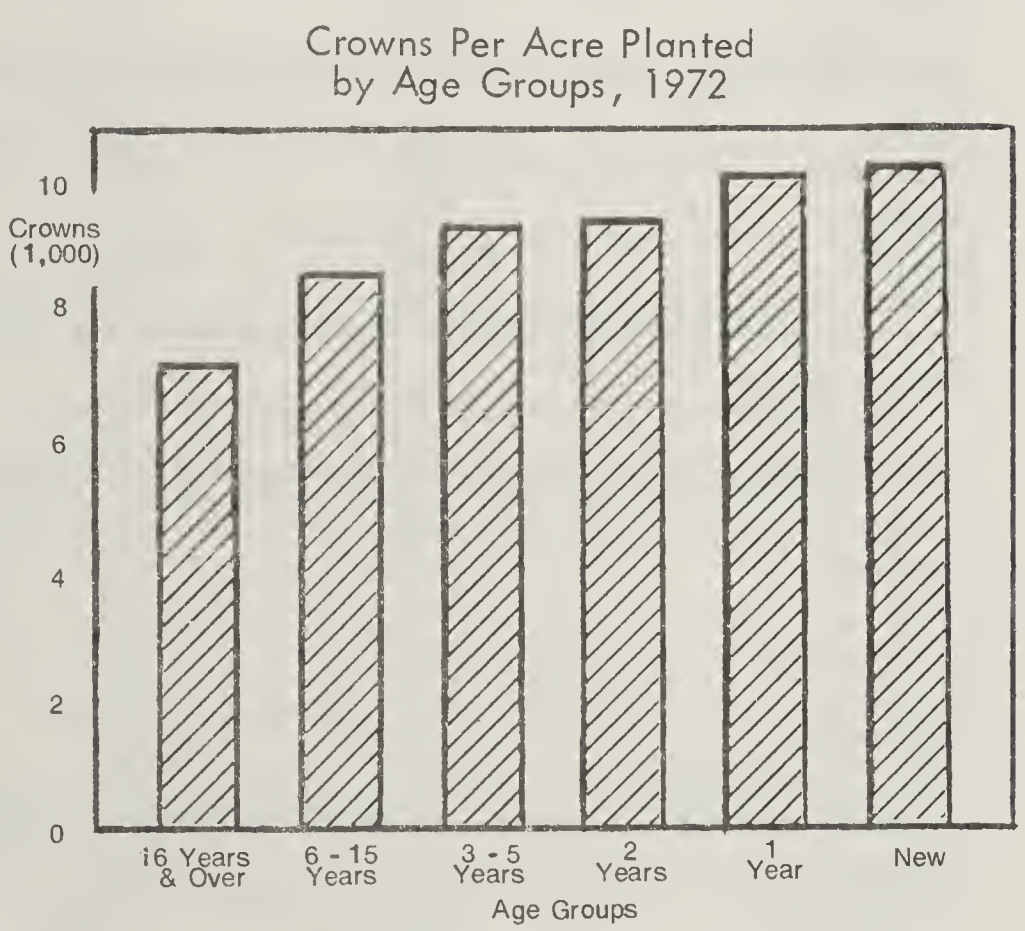
TABLE 6. THE DENSITY OF ASPARAGUS CROWNS PLANTED, BY YEARS AND ACREAGE SIZE GROUP

ACREAGE SIZE GROUP	Average crowns per acre planted in					
	1972	1971	1970	1967-1969	1957-1966	Before 1957
Less than 5	8,883	*	7,333	7,911	7,166	7,071
5 - 9	7,980	9,350	8,500	8,604	6,977	6,681
10 - 19	9,379	8,766	9,307	8,973	7,907	6,996
20 - 39	10,112	9,734	9,425	9,569	8,453	6,899
40 - 59	9,684	11,000	10,745	9,315	8,063	6,983
60 - 79	10,208	10,625	10,000	9,185	8,518	8,165
80 - 99	9,785	10,000	11,000	9,250	8,214	7,125
100 and over	12,045	12,555	11,500	11,045	8,923	7,125
STATE AVERAGE	10,362	10,197	9,325	9,269	8,450	7,185

* Not reported to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

The survey results indicated that the density of crowns for the state average increased from 7,185 per acre planted prior to 1957 to 10,362 per acre planted in 1972 (Table 5). The density has increased steadily over the years.

Table 6 summarizes the density of crowns by acreage size groups. There were some variations in densities within each age group. Relatively higher densities were found in the larger size groups.



ASPARAGUS ACREAGE HARVESTED AND UNHARVESTED IN 1972

Seventy-nine percent, (14,603 acres), of the State's total asparagus acres were reported of harvesting age in 1972 and 21 percent, (3,890 acres), were non-bearing (Tables 7 and 8). Of the total acres of harvesting age, 87 percent, (12,677 acres), was harvested, while 13 percent, (1,926 acres), was not harvested for economic reasons, such as labor shortage, low yields, etc.

TABLE 7. ASPARAGUS ACREAGE, HARVESTED AND UNHARVESTED IN 1972, BY COUNTIES

DISTRICT and COUNTY	Total acres	Acres of harvesting age		Non-bearing
		Harvested	Not harvested for economic reasons	
Grand Traverse & Leelanau	85	53	4	28
Manistee	104	77	8	19
Other Counties	128	128	0	0
NORTH	317	258	12	47
Percent	100	81.4	3.8	14.8
Mason	245	192	18	35
Muskegon	427	371	13	43
Newaygo	124	103	4	17
Oceana	6,788	4,231	1,029	1,528
Other Counties	206	135	7	64
WEST CENTRAL	7,790	5,032	1,071	1,687
Percent	100	64.6	13.7	21.7
Allegan	405	307	17	81
Berrien	2,823	2,161	61	601
Cass	1,529	1,191	18	320
Kalamazoo	106	102	3	1
Ottawa	233	172	33	28
Van Buren	5,135	3,335	707	1,093
Other Counties	155	119	4	32
SOUTHWEST	10,386	7,387	843	2,156
Percent	100	71.1	8.1	20.8
STATE TOTAL	18,493	12,677	1,926	3,890
Percent	100	68.6	10.4	21.0

TABLE 8. ASPARAGUS ACREAGE HARVESTED AND UNHARVESTED IN 1972, BY ACREAGE SIZE GROUP

ACREAGE SIZE GROUP	Total acres	Acres of harvesting age		Non-bearing
		Harvested	Not harvested for economic reasons	
Less than 5	1,233	904	81	248
5 - 9	1,932	1,453	240	225
10 - 19	2,610	2,031	141	452
20 - 39	3,901	2,692	231	978
40 - 59	2,517	1,417	474	626
60 - 79	1,629	1,233	59	337
80 - 99	1,377	923	55	399
100 and over	3,294	2,024	645	625
TOTAL	18,493	12,677	1,926	3,890

Of the total harvested acres, 58 percent was located in the southwest and 40 percent in the west central, leaving only about 2 percent in the north district.

As for the total acres not harvested for economic reasons, 44 percent were in the southwest, 55 percent were in the west central district, and the rest, one percent in the north district. Oceana county had the highest acreage, (1,029 acres), not harvested for economic reasons and Van Buren was next in line, (707 acres). These two counties accounted for about 90 percent of the total unharvested acres in 1972.

As shown in Table 8, size groups "100 acres or more" and 40-59 acres had the highest unharvested acres, 645 and 474 acres, respectively. These two size groups also had the highest unharvested rate in relation to the corresponding acreage of harvesting age.

ASPARAGUS ACREAGE PLOWED OUT IN 1971 AND 1972, AND TOTAL ACREAGE INTENTIONS FOR 1973

There were 112 growers who reported a total of 346 acres of asparagus plowed out in 1971, and 101 growers who reported 299 acres plowed out in 1972 (Tables 9 and 10). At the time of the survey, some growers indicated they possibly would plow out additional acreage in 1972, but they had not decided on how many acres.

TABLE 9. ASPARAGUS ACREAGE PLOWED OUT IN 1971 AND 1972, AND TOTAL ACREAGE EXPECTED FOR HARVEST IN 1973, BY COUNTIES

DISTRICT and COUNTY	Acres of harvesting age	Acres plowed out		Expected for harvest in 1973
		1971	1972	
Gr. Traverse & Leelanau	57	0	0	81
Manistee	85	0	0	179
Other Counties	128	0	0	98
NORTH	270	0	0	358
Mason	210	0	0	127
Muskegon	384	6	0	383
Newaygo	107	0	0	124
Oceana	5,260	43	89	5,224
Other Counties	142	0	0	40
WEST CENTRAL	6,103	49	89	5,898
Allegan	324	0	4	323
Berrien	2,222	99	43	2,387
Cass	1,209	65	47	1,254
Kalamazoo	105	1	4	98
Ottawa	205	20	0	221
Van Buren	4,042	112	112	4,705
Other Counties	123	0	0	119
SOUTHWEST	8,230	297	210	9,107
STATE TOTAL	14,603	346	299	15,363

TABLE 10. ASPARAGUS ACREAGE PLOWED OUT IN 1971 AND 1972, AND TOTAL ACREAGE EXPECTED FOR HARVEST IN 1973, BY ACREAGE SIZE GROUP

ACREAGE SIZE GROUP	Acres of harvesting age	Acres plowed out		Expected for harvest in 1973
		1971	1972	
Less than 5	985	52	54	967
5 - 9	1,693	90	52	1,534
10 - 19	2,172	70	45	2,225
20 - 39	2,923	52	40	3,241
40 - 59	1,891	23	53	2,055
60 - 79	1,292	20	0	1,294
80 - 99	978	0	23	1,035
100 and over	2,669	39	32	3,012
TOTAL	14,603	346	299	15,363

Each of the 101 growers who reported asparagus acres plowed out in 1972 was asked the reason for plow-out. The most prevalent reason of all, reported by 48 growers, was that their asparagus was too old. The next most important reason, listed by 42 growers, was that the fields were unproductive (poor yields, poor beds, too many weeds, etc.). Four growers mentioned that the asparagus land was used for construction (roads, buildings, etc.). Another 7 growers said they could not hire help or they were unable to work their acreage.

Growers were also asked, "How many acres of asparagus do you expect to harvest next year?" This was an effort to estimate the possible total acreage for 1973. In response to this question, the most frequent answer was "same as this year." However, the summarized results indicated a total of 15,363 acres, an increase of 5.2 percent from the 1972 acres of harvesting age (Tables 9 and 10).

ASPARAGUS PRODUCTION AND DISPOSITION

Production of Michigan asparagus covered by the survey totaled 18,681,327 pounds, with 57 percent in the southwest district, 41 percent in the west central and only 2 percent in the north district (Table 11).

Production in the southwest district was concentrated in Van Buren, Berrien

TABLE 11: ASPARAGUS YIELD PER ACRE, PRODUCTION AND DISPOSITION, BY COUNTIES, MICHIGAN, 1972

DISTRICT and COUNTY	Harvested acres	Production		Disposition		
		Per acre	Total	Processors	Fresh market	Others
		Pounds			Pounds	
Gr. Traverse & Leelanau	53	1,567	83,050	83,050	0	0
Manistee	77	1,535	118,184	114,993	3,191	0
Other Counties	128	1,522	194,816	191,894	2,922	0
NORTH	258	1,535	396,050	389,937	6,113	0
Percent			100	98.5	1.5	0
Mason	192	1,522	292,200	290,512	1,500	188
Muskegon	371	1,517	562,800	599,236	3,564	0
Newaygo	103	1,441	148,423	147,547	745	131
Oceana	4,231	1,503	6,360,106	6,321,604	8,575	29,927
Other Counties	135	1,467	198,045	144,375	53,670	0
WEST CENTRAL	5,032	1,503	7,561,574	7,463,274	68,054	30,246
Percent			100	98.7	0.9	0.4
Allegan	307	1,455	466,695	359,143	23,675	63,877
Berrien	2,161	1,435	3,100,467	3,056,952	40,329	3,186
Cass	1,191	1,468	1,744,394	1,677,846	62,506	8,042
Kalamazoo	102	1,551	158,202	158,202	0	0
Ottawa	172	1,389	238,978	166,835	71,983	160
Van Buren	3,335	1,451	4,839,085	3,995,749	859,812	10,524
Other Counties	119	1,473	175,882	172,540	3,342	0
SOUTHWEST	7,387	1,452	10,723,703	9,576,267	1,061,647	85,789
Percent			100	89.3	9.9	0.8
STATE TOTAL	12,677	1,474	18,681,327	17,429,478	1,135,814	116,035
Percent			100	93.3	6.1	0.6

TABLE 12. ASPARAGUS YIELD PER ACRE, PRODUCTION AND DISPOSITION BY ACREAGE SIZE GROUP, MICHIGAN, 1972

ACREAGE SIZE GROUP	Harvested acres	Production		Disposition		
		Per acre	Total	Processors	Fresh market	Others
		Pounds			Pounds	
Less than 5	904	1,272	1,149,620	920,840	221,882	6,898
5 - 9	1,453	1,350	1,961,150	1,851,531	87,810	21,809
10 - 19	2,031	1,444	2,932,776	2,773,403	175,944	23,429
20 - 39	2,692	1,561	4,202,412	3,854,109	343,398	4,905
40 - 59	1,417	1,515	2,146,685	1,995,424	96,504	54,757
60 - 79	1,233	1,546	1,906,678	1,805,362	97,079	4,237
80 - 99	923	1,691	1,560,687	1,529,884	30,803	0
100 and over	2,024	1,394	2,821,319	2,738,925	82,394	0
TOTAL	12,677	1,474	18,681,327	17,429,478	1,135,814	116,035
Percent			100	93.3	6.1	0.6

and Cass counties. Oceana was the major producing county in the west central district.

The average yield per acre varied among districts. The north district had the highest yield per acre, 1,535 pounds. Yields in the west central and southwest districts averaged 1,503 and 1,452 pounds per acre, respectively. The State average yield was 1,474 pounds per acre.

Many growers commented that their asparagus was not fully harvested. In late June, pickers moved to other places before the season was over. For asparagus this is, of course, one of the reasons for termination of harvest.

About 93 percent of the total asparagus produced in the State in 1972 was sold to processors. Approximately 6 percent was sold to fresh markets, and less than 1 percent was used for other purposes (Tables 11 and 12).

When summarized by acreage size groups, it was noted that 32 percent of the State's total production was produced on farms with less than 20 acres of asparagus.

The size group "20-39" acres accounted for 23 percent of total production, and the size group "100 acres and over" for 15 percent (Table 12).

The average yield per acre by acreage size group ranged from 1,277 to 1,691 pounds. The size group "80-99" acres had the highest yield and the "less than 5 acres" group had the lowest. Except for the largest size group, "100 acres or more", in which sleds or mechanical cutters were sometimes applied for harvesting, higher yields per acre were harvested from the larger size groups.

ASPARAGUS INQUIRY

O. M. B. Number: 40-S72034
Approval Expires: 8-31-72

MICHIGAN CROP REPORTING SERVICE
P. O. BOX 1020, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48904

June 15, 1972

Dear Grower:

This survey is to better evaluate the current status of asparagus production and its future in Michigan. Your help is needed. Individual reports are kept confidential and used only in arriving at totals.

The enclosed envelope requires no stamp.

Sincerely,

(Please correct if necessary)

C. A. Hines, Agr'l Statistician, In Charge

If you are not an asparagus grower, please check here ☐ and RETURN this questionnaire.

Please report for all land you operate in Michigan

ACREAGE AND AGES OF PLANTINGS

1. Total acres of asparagus now in your farming operation (include asparagus acreage rented or leased from others). . . _____ Acres

2. Of the total acres of asparagus in your operation (item 1), how many acres were planted in:

Year Planted	Age of Bed	Acres	Crowns per acre*
1972	New this yr.		
1971	1 yr. old		
1970	2 yrs. old		
1967-1969	3 - 5 yrs.		
1957-1966	6 - 15 yrs.		
Before 1957	16 and older		
TOTAL (Should equal item 1)			X X X

* If you don't know exactly, give your best estimate.

PLOW OUT AND INTENTIONS

3. How many acres of asparagus:

   a. Were plowed out or permanently abandoned since July 1, 1971 . . . . . _____ Acres

   b. Will be plowed out between now and 1973 harvest. . . . . _____ Acres

   Reason for plow out _____

4. How many acres of asparagus do you expect to harvest next year (1973) . . . . . _____ Acres

PRODUCTION AND MARKETING

5. Of the total acres of asparagus (item 1) how many were:

   a. Harvested this season (1972) . . . . . _____ Acres

   b. Mature enough to produce asparagus but not harvested because of labor shortages, low yields, or other reasons . _____ Acres

6. What was the total quantity of asparagus harvested in 1972 from your acreage (item 5a) (if harvest is not complete, estimate total). . . . . _____ Pounds

7. How many pounds of asparagus produced this year (item 6) were:

   a. Sold to processors . . . . . _____ Pounds

   b. Sold for fresh market use. . . . . _____ Pounds

   c. Other. (Please specify) _____ . . . _____ Pounds

8. Are there any growers in your locality that sell most of their asparagus through fresh market outlets such as roadside markets, stores, packing sheds, the Benton Harbor or other city markets?. . . . . .Yes _____ No _____

   If yes, please list names and addresses below:

   _____ _____

   _____ _____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

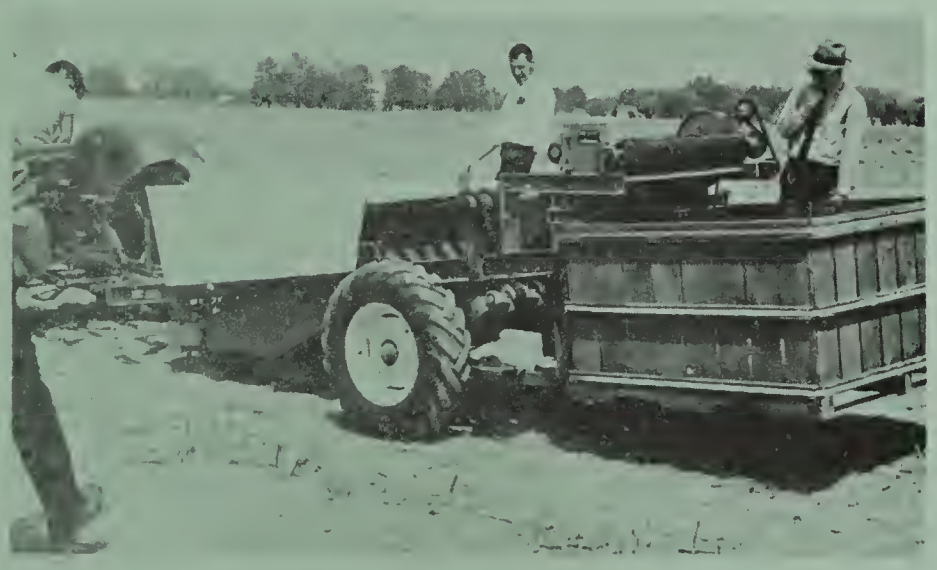
[ ] Check if you wish to receive a copy of the published report.

REPORTED BY _____ DATE _____

One row sled harvester

Five-row sled harvester

Asparagus receiving flume



Mechanical harvester

MICHIGAN CROP REPORTING SERVICE
SRS, USDA, 201 FEDERAL BLDG.,
P.O. BOX 1020,
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48904

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